

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
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INFO AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
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AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS COLLOQUIUM, BUTARE, JULY 3-7, 1978

REF: STATE 188250

SUMMARY: IVORIAN PARTICIPANT MAMADOU FADIKA STATED COLLOQUIUM IN BUTARE WAS A SUCCESS AND HOPED SIMILAR MEETINGS WOULD BE ORGANIZED IN THE NEAR FUTURE. BASIC THEME AT COLLOQUIUM WAS THE AFRICAN CULTURAL CONTEXT OF HUMAN RIGHTS. HIS ONLY COMPLAINT CONCERNED MINOR LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS. FADIKA STATED COLLOQUIUM DOCUMENTS WOULD BE PUBLISHED SOON. END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY OFFICER MET WITH MADADOU FADIKA, PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF APPEALS, TO DISCUSS HUMAN RIGHTS COLLOQUIUM AT BUTARE. FADIKA WAS VERY PLEASED WITH THE COLLOQUIUM AND ITS RESULTS AND HOPED SIMILAR MEETINGS WOULD BE ORGANIZED IN THE NEAR FUTURE. HE WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED WITH THE CONTENT AND INTELLECTUAL QUALITY OF THE DIALOGUE AT BUTARE. FADIKA STATED THAT, WHILE PRACTICALLY ALL KEY ASPECTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS WERE DISCUSSED, THE EMPHASIS WAS UNCLASSIFIED

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PLACED ON THE AFRICAN CULTURAL CONTEXT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND, TO A LESSER EXTENT, ON THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER.

2. WHILE DISCUSSING THE AFRICAN CULTURAL CONTEXT, SOME OF THE PARTICIPANTS RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF ADAPTING THE 1948 DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO AFRICAN REALITIES. MOST OF THE PARTICIPANTS, HOWEVER, BELIEVED THAT IT WOULD BE UNWISE TO TAMPER WITH

WELL-ESTABLISHED PRINCIPLES AND THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO ALTER AFRICAN REALITIES THROUGH SOCIAL-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. IN THE MEANTIME, ANY ANALYSIS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA SHOULD BE MADE ON THE BASIS OF AFRICAN CULTURE AND TRADITIONS. AS AN EXAMPLE, FADIKA EMPHASIZED HOW AFRICAN TRADITIONS PROTECTED THE INDIVIDUAL WITH RESPECT TO WHAT WE WOULD CALL BASIC HUMAN NEEDS AND PROVIDED FOR HIS PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING THROUGH MEMBERSHIP IN A GENUINE COMMUNITY.

3. FADIKA REPORTED THAT IN GENERAL THE COLLOQUIUM WAS WELL ORGANIZED, THAT RWANDAN AUTHORITIES WERE HOSPITABLE, THAT PARTICIPANTS ESTABLISHED A GOOD RAPPORT AND THAT EVERYONE HAD AN AGREEABLE AND PRODUCTIVE TIME. HOWEVER, THERE WERE A FEW SNAGS. SOME OF THE PARTICIPANTS DID NOT HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO COVER THEIR EXPENSES. APPARENTLY, IT TOOK THE FELLOW FROM CHAD THREE DAYS TO REACH KIGALI DURING WHICH HE SPENT MOST OF HIS MONEY. FADIKA THOUGHT THAT IN THE FUTURE IT WOULD BE BETTER TO MEET IN A CITY THAT WAS EASIER TO REACH AND THAT HAD MORE ACCOMMODATIONS.

4. FINALLY, FADIKA STATED THAT COLLOQUIUM DOCUMENTS WOULD SOON BE PUBLISHED. FADIKA CONTRIBUTED A WORKING PAPER ENTITLED HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE AFRICAN TRADITION, A COPY OF WHICH HE WOULD PROVIDE THE EMBASSY AFTER HE HAD POLISHED IT UP A BIT. IN SUM, FADIKA CONSIDERED THE COLLOQUIUM AT BUTARE A SUCCESS.

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